



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

Child pornographer sentenced to 25 years in prison *North Carolina man preyed on children in U.S. and Syria*

Alexandria, Va. -- Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Burhan Mahmod Hinawi, age 44, of Charlotte, North Carolina was sentenced today by Senior District Judge Claude M. Hilton to 25 years in prison to be followed by supervised release for life for production of child pornography in Syria which Hinawi transported into the United States.

The child pornography movies produced by Hinawi recorded him engaging in a variety of sexual acts with male and female children between the ages of 12 and 15. Court documents reported that after Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers found the videos in Hinawi's luggage at Dulles airport on July 25, 2005, agents discovered that Hinawi had been convicted in Charlotte, North Carolina on three felony counts of indecent liberties with a very young minor and sentenced to six months in jail with work release. Court papers also documented that additional investigation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement revealed additional child victims in Charlotte, North Carolina and in Syria. Videos taken by Hinawi on prior trips to Syria documented the molestations of victims as young as six years old.

United States Attorney Paul J. McNulty praised the work of the CBP and ICE agents who worked on this case. "The dedicated work of the agents who investigated this case has stopped a thirteen-year string of child molestations. The agents who protect us from the enemies from without and the predators from within deserve our continuing thanks. In this case, the time fits the crime."

"Keeping child predators off the streets and out of our communities is a priority for ICE and our law enforcement partners. Thanks to the good work of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to identify this predator, ICE was able to locate the child victims of his heinous crimes," said Tom Madigan, acting special agent in charge of ICE's Office of Investigations in Washington, DC. "This predator's lengthy criminal career has now come to an end."

The case was investigated by Special Agents Robert E. Connelly, II and James Burns of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and Officer Adam Coppolo, U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The prosecution of the case was handled by Assistant United States Attorney Gerald J. Smagala.

ICE's investigation into Hinawi was part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers. Since Operation Predator was launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 7,000 individuals, including 17 in the District of Columbia

and 100 in North Carolina.

ICE encourages the reporting of suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. Investigators staff the hotline around the clock.

Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.